

even withdraw cash from my bank account in the USA, cable TV (41 channels!), and an American-style supermarket with a reliable supply of flour, fresh fruit, meat and vegetables, cooking oil and, of course, excellent wine and that special Chilean brandy called *pisco*. And yes, there is an international airport just ten minutes from our home in neighboring Concon. But we do have to pay an 18% 'value-added tax' (IVA), and we do have to pay a hefty duty on items (even technical books!) imported from abroad.

Finally, I should report that last year I asked Governor Jacobo Hey what he believed to be the Island's biggest problem, and without hesitation he answered "Unemployment of the young people". And we discussed the related problem, the mediocre education provided Rapanui children. The mediocrity results mainly from the pittance of funds received from the government. (Governor Hey, it should be noted, holds a law degree from the University of Chile).

Maybe there is a happy note to end on: President Frei recently announced a whopping increase in cigarette and gasoline taxes with the income, we are told, to be put into improving education (and increasing old-age pensions). Let's hope that the Island will receive more than a trickle-down of these funds.

William Liller, *Reñaca, Chile*

## REVIEWS



*Easter Island*, Map #308. Published by ITMB Publishing and World Wide Books and Maps. ISBN 0 921463 30 8. First Edition 1993-1995. \$6.95. Cartography by David Sami, Suzanne Bald and Chandra Ali.

Review by Georgia Lee

A new map of Easter Island has been published and, being an *aficionado* of maps of my favorite island, I rushed to order it. What a disappointment. This latest effort relies heavily on a map published in Spain and Chile in 1985, under the direction of the late *rapanuiophile*, Antony Pujador. However, in relying on the earlier map, they simply repeated errors and then added some zingers of their own: by trying to translate everything, we see on the map such placenames as "Iti Island" and "Nui Island" for the *motus*. Petroglyphs are indicated for Motu Iti but not Motu Nui. Even the well-known petroglyph site at Orongo is off in left field, far from its actual location. Akahanga is described as having four *moai*! The inscrutable notation from the earlier map "Strong Magnetic Disturbances Here", placed on the side of Terevaka, is repeated. Anyone who ever held a compass on ANY part of Rapa Nui knows that 'magnetic disturbances' are everywhere on the island.

This map is not worth an indepth critique but I must add one more complaint. Floating around the map are little 'blurbs' telling various things about island life and history. Here we learn that Heyerdahl stopped off on Rapa Nui on his raft voyage to Polynesia (!) and the kneeling statue at Rano Raraku is described as looking like "a Nubian or Yemeni in meditation." Please.

CONAF (Corporación Nacional Forestal) and the World Monuments Fund published a map in 1992. It costs more than this most recent effort but is worth it: (for one thing, the paper is coated so that it won't disintegrate in the rain). It is handsome enough to hang on a wall, with well-done illustrations. It is printed in both English and Spanish. In February of this year the map was for sale at the CONAF office on the island.



Catherine et Michel Orliac. *Bois Sculptés de L'île de Pâques*. Collection Arts Témoins. Editions Paréntheses/ Editions Louise Leiris. 1995. 72, cours Julien, 13006 Marseille, France. In French. Soft cover, 92 pages. Size 6½ x 9½. Maps, drawings, and 59 color photos. ISSN 11240-098X; ISBN 2-86364-505-6.

Review by Joan T. Seaver Kurze

Excellent photographic reproductions and a well-documented text make this work a fine introduction to early wooden sculptures of Easter Island/Rapa Nui. By illustrating the symbolic importance of carving to Polynesians, the Orliacs have produced a book that helps shake a 'second-best status' usually awarded to Rapa Nui wooden sculptures in comparison to the island's renowned stone behemoths.

Titles in bold type divided the book's text and neatly introduce each section. For example, we move quickly from Jacob Roggeveen's entrance on Easter Sunday, 1722, through exploratory visits by González (1770), Cook (1774), Pérouse (1786) and Dupetit-Thouars (1838) to the appearance of Brother Eugène Eyraud in 1864 and the arrival of the missionaries Père Hyppolyte Roussel, Père Gaspard Zumborn and Brother Théodule Escolan in 1886. Thus the first 144 years of Rapa Nui contact with Europeans is condensed into two pages entitled "Sailors, Pirates and Missionaries to Ile de Paques."

In the next section, "Lost Island in the Large Ocean", the authors choose the Gambier archipelago instead of the Marquesan Islands as the closest Polynesian connection to tiny Rapa Nui. This, of course, supports a fellow French researcher, Alfred Métraux, who earlier claimed that Polynesian colonists were likely to have sailed from Mangareva or Mangaia to Rapa Nui. Once again we find the island's size disputed: 166 square km according to the Orliacs, 171 square km according to Paul Bahn's figures in a recent *Rapa Nui Journal* book review.

Because a forest of large trees greeted the first Rapa Nui arrivals, such industries as architecture (wooden houses) and monumental statuary (moving the stone torsos from quarry to *ahu*) developed on the island. John Flenley's pollen analysis from the island's volcanic craters supports the Orliac's claim that *Sophora toromiro* was the only indigenous tree left to the islanders, so that eventually, Rapa Nui carvers 'lusted' after it.

In 1934, Métraux recorded that islanders translated *toromiro* as 'wood of blood' due to the color of the aged wood.

According to the authors, *toromiro* could just as easily have been described as 'twisted wood' or 'thick wood'. In any case, due to its strength, its resistance to rot, ability to take a nice polish and, perhaps most important of all, its rose color, *toromiro* was considered a sacred material. Thus such royal emblems as batons (*ua*), crescent-shaped pectorals (*rei miro*), and ritual objects such as a skeletal male (*moai kavakava*), a tall, emaciated, elderly woman (*moai pa'a pa'a*) and a sensual young male (*moai tangata*) were carved from this sacred wood.

Oddly enough, on the preceding page, the same claims are made for *Thespesia populnea*. Rongorongo tablets are on this list of sacred Rapa Nui objects. C. Orliac previously explained that many objects of *Thespesia populnea*, the 'rose wood of Oceania' have not survived because of the wood's fragility and inability to be preserved.

Trees, write the Orliacs, supply the best material for symbolizing the bonds between humans and supernaturals. Trees, grounded in the earth home of humans, held their heads high toward the sky of supernatural forces and provided shelter for those birds bringing messages to earth from the gods of Polynesia. Thus this belief system allowed wood-famished Rapa Nui to regard driftwood as a special gift from their gods.

Despite twelve centuries of isolation, Rapa Nui wood sculpture shows vestigial links to a common, ancient Polynesian tradition. The double-headed Rapa Nui *ua*, for example, resembles a Marquesan *u'u*. But, we're told, it is not only the island's 'classic' production, i.e., those figures with physical features already enumerated by other researchers (for some reason inlaid eyes of obsidian and bone are not mentioned here) that depicts the originality of Rapa Nui wood carving. Numerous non-stereotypic representations of human limbs, sea creatures and strange anthropomorphic-zoomorphic creatures often with composite or deformed head must be included.

The authors conclude that small wooden sculptures were used ceremonially much later than the stone *moai* since missionaries saw such ritual practices as late as 1868. Indeed there is historical evidence for the ceremonial use of such pieces, but one wonders if rituals witnessed on Rapa Nui by early Europeans had themselves already evolved from a former ceremonial style for which there is no evidence.

A changing response by Rapa Nui to their European 'market' is addressed in a section loosely translated as "Laws of the Marketplace: Authentic Work or Souvenirs?" Ninety-nine boats visited Rapa Nui between 1722 and 1862 and, after 1900, many boats were whalers. During the first half of the 19th century the islanders probably had enough wooden pieces to trade for "European goods". However, about 1840, sculptors stopped carving artifacts for ritual use, and tried instead to accommodate to their customers' tastes. As long as traditional conventions continued, write the Orliacs, it is difficult to distinguish between 'new' trade goods and 'old' ceremonial objects from this time period.

From 1860 to 1879 the Rapa Nui style of sculpting spread to Peru and Eastern Polynesia. This was probably due to slave

raids from South America and, later, the islanders' travel to Tahiti and the Gambiers with missionaries. Nevertheless Surgeon Linton Palmer's group found a surprising number of available carvings on the island in 1868, including the oft-photographed figure of a woman squatting above her exaggerated vulva. During Palmer's visit, missionaries Roussel and Zumbohm sent a fine collection of objects (lizards, sharks, birds, etc.), apparently of ancient manufacture, to the officers of HMS *Topaze*. Unfortunately the gift was misdirected to the ship's crew, and it was soon dispersed without any documentation.

In the 1880s the veritable mountain of Rapa Nui carvings that began to appear was systematically encouraged by the island's new ranch manager, a Tahitian *ariki* W. Alexander Salmon. Instead of 'classical' carvings, these pieces tended to be very large and generally displayed great disregard to classical motifs. This is not surprising, considering the islanders' lack of models to follow and master carvers who could pass technological information to apprentices. During the next few decades, in an attempt to restore their technical ability, island carvers sought inspiration in oral traditions or just followed their own imaginations. When published drawings and photographs of Rapa Nui pieces in European museums appeared on the island, some carvers copied them. Others (Juan Tepano, for example, carving at the time of Métraux' and Lavachery's visit in 1934-35) continued to exploit their own ideas.

Of course no one really knows what these sculptures mean, and the Orliacs are wise to limit their claims. Similar to the work of other researchers, however, they have placed the carvings into categories: 1) long, thin objects (*ua*, *rapa*); 2) smaller objects that were carried on the body (*rei miro*, *kavakava*, *pa'a pa'a*, *tahonga*, certain zoomorphs), and 3) pieces similar to the second category but less public in nature and not to be hung or worn. A particular object's ability, or lack of, to support a hanging cord could assign it to category two or three. We are told that designs on the heads of anthropomorphic figures often were carved by a hand other than that of the figure's sculptor. "In all probability", the authors claim, the most talented sculptors reserved their production for powerful persons, so, for example the superior quality of a carving of the second category (an object meant for public viewing), would represent the politico/religious status of the craftsman's patron instead of reflecting antiquity. However, I found no evidence in the text for this conclusion.


Descriptions and illustrations for three Rapa Nui legends relating to wood carvings that were collected by Métraux follow the notes for the text and a bibliographic list. 'Catalog', the book's final section, contains photographs and descriptions of 32 wooden sculptures from European museums and private collections. Here are some of the author's more interesting remarks about the artifacts. A caption for the unique and still ambiguous hand brought back by Cook in 1774 assigns long fingers and long ears to children of "good family". The *moai tangata manu*, *moai kava kava* and the *moko* share characteristics (inlaid eyes,

chevron-shaped eyebrows, carved ribs, doughnut at the dorsal waist and bas relief spinal vertebrae) that suggest these three artifacts represent different aspects of the same supernatural 'entity'. The crescent shape of the *rei miro* refers to a phase of the moon (some researchers suggest a boat shape). The *tangata moko* (lizard man), although described by oral tradition as a club often planted at the door of a house for protection against intruders, was, the Orliacs claim, a creature hung inside a house or around the neck of a dancer. I do challenge the statement that a narrow, raised ridge divides the *tahonga* into four sections because I have seen pictures at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu of *tahonga* divided, like coconuts, into three sections.

Twenty-eight pages of maps, reproductions of historic engravings, the Orliacs' own excellent photographs of the island, descriptions of the islanders' Polynesian ancestors and their religious beliefs (including a discussion of good and bad traits of the *aku aku*), comments about the priest-carvers of wood and stone and the *ahu moai* (representing gods, ancestors, chiefs or other important persons raised to the rank of divine protection) eventually lead us to the authors' subject, wooden sculptures of Rapa Nui. Published in French, this book represents, with very few exceptions, Rapa Nui wood carving from the time of Cook to Heyerdahl's Norwegian expedition in 1955. Most of the pieces discussed are found in European museums and collections. Since this work is not of global scope (pieces from the Bishop Museum for example, are not included, nor are the modern Christian saints in the Hangaroa Church of the Holy Spirit, my own specialty), a more accurate title for the book might have been *Early Wooden Sculptures from Easter Island in European Collections*.

Although so short a book does not really need a Table of Contents, I would have liked to use an Index. Also, it is unfortunate that Dr. Steven Fischer's definitive 'pending' book on *kohau rongorongo* was not available to the Orliacs for reference.

In closing, the Easter Island Foundation/*Fundación Rapanui* owes Catherine and Michel Orliac great and sincere thanks for enclosing the French version of its informational brochure in the first 1000 copies sold of *Bois Sculptés de L'île de Pâques*.

 *Easter Island. The Heritage and its Conservation*. A. Elena Charola. 1994. World Monuments Fund, New York. 68 pages. Soft cover, line drawings, maps, black and white photographs and 72 color photographs.

*Review by Paul G. Bahn*

What a pleasure to read a well-informed, accurate, straightforward and unpretentious book about Easter Island. The latest in a distinguished series which the World Monuments Fund (previously the International Fund for Monuments) has devoted to the island over the years, it is well designed, with colour photographs on each left-hand page and a map at the top of each right-hand page marking the sites mentioned in the text and captions on that page. The book is

divided into three main sections: a historical overview, the monuments of the island, and their preservation. There are three appendices (the island's archaeological elements, a glossary of terms, and a bibliography), a Foreword by Gonzalo Figueroa, and a brief account of the World Monuments Fund's involvement in Easter Island by its executive director, Bonnie Burnham, accompanied by a remarkable photograph of a moai head on open-air exhibition among New York skyscrapers in 1968. Charola's excellent text provides a short but up-to-date account of Rapa Nui's archaeology and cultural history, a valuable overview of conservation projects on the island, and an introduction to the problems involved in countering the effects of natural deterioration, tourism, vandalism and unfortunate incidents such as statue-casting or damage by movie makers. All of these factors are very well illustrated.

One welcome aspect of the book as a whole is the tribute paid throughout to the pioneering work of William Mulloy, whose restorations of monuments were in large measure made possible by the Fund. It is interesting to learn that, before he died, Mulloy recommended that no further reconstruction should take place, since the destruction was an important part of the island's history. Now that the process of registering the whole island on UNESCO's World Heritage List is at last underway, it is to be hoped that efforts to conserve and consolidate the archaeological vestiges will henceforth be better funded and coordinated. A Spanish-language edition of this book is forthcoming.

**Note:** *Easter Island: The Heritage and its Conservation* by Dr. A. Elena Charola is available from the Easter Island Foundation. Price is \$24 plus \$3 shipping/handling [surface mail] CA residents add 7.5% sales tax. Foreign air mail extra. Write to the Easter Island Foundation, 666 Dead Cat Alley, Woodland, CA 95695. Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing and delivery.



*Geiseler's Easter Island Report: An 1880s Anthropological Account*. Introduction, annotations and notes by William S. Ayres; translated by William S. Ayres and Gabriella S. Ayres. *Asian and Pacific Archaeology Series* 12. University of Hawai'i Press, 1995. ISBN 0-8248-1555-6; 207 pages, paper cover.

*Review by Georgina Lee*

This publication has been a long time coming, and at last it has appeared in English translation. Lieutenant-Captain Geiseler, who arrived to Rapa Nui in 1882, made the island's first detailed ethnographic descriptions. Although on the island for only four days, he collected more than 250 craft and technological items (some of which were never seen again on the island), 50 human crania and two hair samples. His main informant was the half-Tahitian, Alexander Salmon, who also was Paymaster Thomson's informant in 1886. As Ayres